

November 19, 1951

Dr. T. W. Millen
Hyline Research Laboratory
Dallas Center, Iowa

Dear Dr. Millen:

I have your letter of November 14. I regret that our work on phage does not include staphylococcus, so that we cannot be of any direct assistance to you. The following comments may be of some use to you, however.

According to the literature, there is a high order of strain specificity in the interactions of phage with staphylococci. Therefore, a phage picked at random as active on one culture might not be likely to lyse your own. The most direct approach would be for you to attempt to isolate a specific phage yourself. The best source would be from the same place as the bacteria were isolated, although fecal suspensions and raw sewage should also be tested. As an alternative, the strains might be sent to someone who has an extensive collection of staph phages.

The most extensive work done in this country on this subject has been by Dr. Roy T. Fisk, Huntington Memorial Hospital, Pasadena California, but about 10 years ago (J. Inf. Dis., 71, 153 1942). More extensive studies, especially on phage-typing of staphylococci of animal origin, have been carried out recently at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London W.C. 1, England, by Dr. H. Williams Smith (J. Hygiene, 1948), and he is likely to have maintained his collection at the London School. As Dr. Williams Smith has moved to another address, it might be better to send an enquiry to the care of the director.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance. An Australian group has also worked extensively with this material, but in view of the transport nuisance, I did not mention them.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Associate Professor of Genetics